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ABSTRACT

The Minnesota Dialogue on Education project was a comprehensive statewide survey of public opinion on educational issues conducted by the Minnesota Department of Education from September 1983 through February 1984. The project involved dissemination of 250,000 copies of a Dialogue on Education Study Guide with a questionnaire attached, followed by a series of town meetings conducted by school districts and other community organizations, along with class time in schools set aside to solicit student comments. This official report presents the results of an analysis of the data collected from all participants in the dialogue. The first chapter provides an overview of the project, including its purpose, phases of implementation, and data analysis procedures. Chapter 2 documents citizen participation, including town meeting attendance, student participation by grade level, and participant profile information. Chapter 3, the main body of the report, provides a comprehensive content analysis in three parts: (1) analysis by response form item (including participants' views on the purpose of education, high school graduation competencies, involvement in educational decision-making, instructional time, and educational change); (2) analysis of other data (town meeting open-mike results and dialogue hotline); and (3) anecdotal comments from dialogue participants on a variety of issues. Chapter 4 summarizes key results of the project. The instrumentation is included in four appendixes: the Dialogue Response Form, Discussion Questions for Small Groups, Class Discussion Questions, and Town Meetings Agenda. (TE)

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Minnesota Dialogue on Education

REPORT

EA 017 679

Minnesota Department of Education

Minnesota Dialogue on Education

REPORT

Minnesota Department of Education

Ruth E. Randall
Commissioner of Education

April 1984

Minnesota Department of Education

Capitol Square 550 Cedar Street Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

April 18, 1984

Dear Fellow Minnesotans:

Thank you to all of you who participated in the Minnesota Dialogue on Education.

We have received many ideas and comments from citizens throughout the state. Elementary and secondary students, parents, Minnesotans without children, senior citizens, educators, inmates in correctional facilities, and taxpayers at large have contributed to this Dialogue report.

It is the intention of the Department of Education to make ongoing use of the results of the Minnesota Dialogue on Education. The information available to the Department for decision making will now include a segment of what people in Minnesota want in public education, and those Dialogue results will be referred to in future decisions.

This report will be shared with school districts, the State Board of Education, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, the media, and the public at large. I will continue to consider the Dialogue results throughout my administration as ideas for policy development. Specifically the ideas collected will be used in developing the Department's response to current legislative mandates, and in preparation for the 1985 Legislative session.

I believe that with the assistance of all who participated, the critical process of citizen involvement in public education has been strengthened through this Dialogue. It is my hope that the Dialogue is not completed, but instead beginning. I encourage local districts to continue to build strong vehicles for ongoing dialogue within their communities, and it is my intention to consider further ways to interact with local districts to enhance this vital process.

Sincerely,

Ruth E. Randall

Dr. Ruth E. Randall
Commissioner of Education
612/296-2358

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DIALOGUE OVERVIEW

Introduction

In order to provide a forum for the people of Minnesota to express their ideas about the purpose of public education, the Department of Education initiated a project called the Minnesota Dialogue on Education. This project began in September, 1983, and provided a variety of ways for citizens to communicate their thoughts about the future of public education and what they believe needs to be changed. The Department prepared a Dialogue on Education Study Guide which included information on education in Minnesota, summaries of major national studies, and a set of questions for individuals to complete and return to the Department (the Dialogue Response Form, Appendix A). Two hundred fifty thousand (250,000) copies of the Study Guide were disseminated statewide through schools and public libraries.

The focal event of the Dialogue was a series of town meetings held during February 13-17, 1984, which Governor Rudy Perpich proclaimed "Minnesota Dialogue on Education Week." Every school district was invited to initiate a town meeting in its community, and various groups and organizations were invited to place the Dialogue on meeting agendas. The State Department of Education provided technical support to local town meeting leaders by developing a Town Meeting Manual. During January and February, a toll-free technical assistance "hotline" was available. The Town Meeting Manual included a proposed agenda (see Appendix D) with recommendations for three ways to collect public comments: open-microphone session (unstructured), small group discussion (semi-structured), and the Dialogue Response Form (structured).

Letters from the Commissioner of Education were sent to various educational, civic, service, and youth organizations, and to mayors, chambers of commerce and legislators, to invite and encourage the participation of their memberships and constituents in Dialogue events. In addition, school districts were asked to encourage K-12 student participation during the first 30 minutes of class on February 15 to obtain comments from students. Some newspapers printed questions from the Response Form for readers to cut out, complete, and return to the Department of Education. Finally, a Dialogue Hotline was provided for public comment by telephone during the week of February 13-17.

In addition to the letters described above, a comprehensive publicity plan was implemented by the Department to inform the public at large of the Dialogue and to encourage broad participation. Press releases, a letter to the editor from the Commissioner, public service announcements for the print and broadcast media, as well as posters, were disseminated statewide. Many daily and weekly newspapers printed editorials and feature articles. Several newspapers and television stations donated space or airtime for public service announcements about the Dialogue, and news stories and interviews were carried statewide in both print and broadcast media.

Purpose

The Minnesota Dialogue on Education was conducted so that the people most affected had an opportunity to be involved in planning for the future of public education by sharing their concerns and recommendations with policy makers. The impetus for the Minnesota Dialogue on Education came from the belief that the many recent national studies have focused the nation's attention on public education, that public schools are now faced with unprecedented changes in preparing students for the future, and that citizen input is crucial for determining the direction of those changes and for broadening the base of support for our public schools. Dr. Ruth E. Randall, Commissioner of Education, has stated:

> "Public education is in the spotlight and public interest is more intense than ever before. I believe it is imperative for the people of Minnesota to help plan to meet the challenges in public education. Once public education leaders know what Minnesotans want the purpose of education to be, we can find ways to meet these goals and set the agenda accordingly. Together, we have an excellent opportunity to involve Minnesotans in helping direct the future course of education in this state."

Therefore, the purposes of the Minnesota Dialogue on Education were:

1. To encourage people to discuss education;
2. To provide an opportunity for Minnesotans to share their ideas on the future course of public education in the 1980s with the State Department of Education; and
3. To make those ideas available to decision makers and the public as the future agenda for public education in Minnesota is set.

Data Analysis Procedures

There were five sources of Dialogue data from seven participant groups. The data sources included:

1. A 7-item set of questions called the Dialogue Response Form (Appendix A);
2. A set of 5 questions for small group discussion at the town meetings (Appendix B);
3. Classroom discussion questions for grades K-8 (Appendix C);
4. Tape recordings from the open-mike portion of the town meetings;
5. Recorded comments from the telephone hotline.

Various combinations of the participant groups were made, based on the data item and source document. An explanation is offered in each case where participant groups are consolidated. The seven types of participants are described in Table 1:

Table 1

Dialogue Participant Groups

A. Persons who turned in a Dialogue Response Form to the host of a town meeting. (N = 9,199)

B. Persons who sent a Dialogue Response Form directly to the Department of Education. (N = 3,174)

C. Residents of a correctional facility who completed a Dialogue Response Form. (N = 299)

D. Persons who participated in small group discussions at a school-hosted town meeting. (N = 762 groups)

E. Students in grades 9-12 who completed a Dialogue Response Form. (N = approximately 52,200)

F. Students in grades 5-8 who took part in a teacher-moderated class discussion on items #3 and #6 of the Dialogue Response Form. (N = approximately 76,100)

G. Students in grade K-4 who took part in a teacher-moderated class discussion on item #6 of the Dialogue Response Form. (N = approximately 44,500)

The first step in analyzing the data was to sort all source documents by school district residency of the participant. Not only did this provide an orderly system for handling the large volume of mail, but it also provided some indication of the geographic representativeness of the participant groups.

The next step in the analysis process was to separate the items in the data source documents into open-ended and fixed-choice categories. The fixed-choice categories were key-punched for computer analysis. To make the open-ended responses (i.e., items #3 and #6 on Response Form) available for key-punching, several hundred source forms were reviewed, responses were sorted into naturally occurring categories, and a coding system was developed. Then the open-ended responses were read and manually coded for key-punching.

It should be noted that comments from the hotline telephone data source were transferred by the call recipient onto individual Dialogue Response Forms and entered into the pool of data for participant group B (see Table 1). Tape recordings from the open-mike portion of the town meetings were reviewed by the Department and synthesized onto open-ended recording forms for discussion as a separate analysis section in Chapter III.

Sampling decisions were made because of the large volume of some of the participant groups. All of the fixed-choice items on the Response Form (items #1, 2, 4, 5, 7) were analyzed for participant groups A-C (see Table 1). For the open-ended items (#3 and #6), samples were selected from all participant groups except group D. All of the responses for these items from participant group D (small group discussions) were analyzed.

Because of the size of the samples and the selection process, the findings can be generalized to the group from which the sample was drawn.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

A major goal of the Dialogue on Education was to involve as many Minnesotans as possible in discussing education issues and sharing their ideas about the future of public education in their state. This section summarizes information about those citizens who participated.

Approximately 15,450 persons attended town meetings hosted by school districts and other groups. Responses were received from 52,200 high school students, and 5,744 classrooms of students in kindergarten through 8th grade submitted written input for the Dialogue. The K-8 classrooms represented input from an estimated 120,600 students. After adding 3,174 persons who participated by telephone or by mailing individual Response Forms, the total number of persons who participated in the Dialogue was approximately 191,400. The reader should note that some participants did not fill out individual Response Forms, but participated in small discussion groups which had written summaries.

One way to determine the extent of citizen involvement across the state is to examine representation by school district residency. Table 2A shows that 388 of the state's 435 school districts were represented. This means that 89 percent of the school districts in Minnesota had citizens who participated in the Dialogue in some manner. The number of 14,900 participants attending the 274 town meetings hosted by school districts was established through reports of attendance from the hosting districts and by computation of average meeting size for 14 town meetings for which attendance counts were not available.

Table 2A

Number of Participants in the Dialogue

	Number of Participants	School Districts Represented Number	(%)
Town Meeting Participants	15,450	274	(63%)
Student Participants	172,800	290	(67%)
Mail-in Participation	3,174*	347	(80%)
Total	191,424	388 (unduplicated total)	(89%) (unduplicated percent)

* Some participants who mailed Response Forms to the Department may have attended Town Meetings.

Town Meetings

The town meetings were the focal point of the Dialogue. In November, 1983, all school superintendents in the state received an invitation from the Commissioner of Education to initiate a town meeting in their communities. Table 2B shows that the Department received data from 274 school district-hosted town meetings. Figure 1 illustrates school districts which participated in these town meetings.

Community groups, correctional facilities, and organizations were also encouraged to initiate Dialogue meetings. At the date of this report, the Department was informed of five correctional facilities, two senior citizen centers, three community and school district advisory groups, six education organizations, and one chamber of commerce that conducted Dialogue meetings. The totals reported in Table 2B show that 15,450 persons attended 291 town meetings across the state.

Table 2B

Town Meeting Attendance

	Number of Sites	Number of Persons
School District Town Meetings	274	14,900
Special Group Town Meetings	17	550
Total	291	15,450

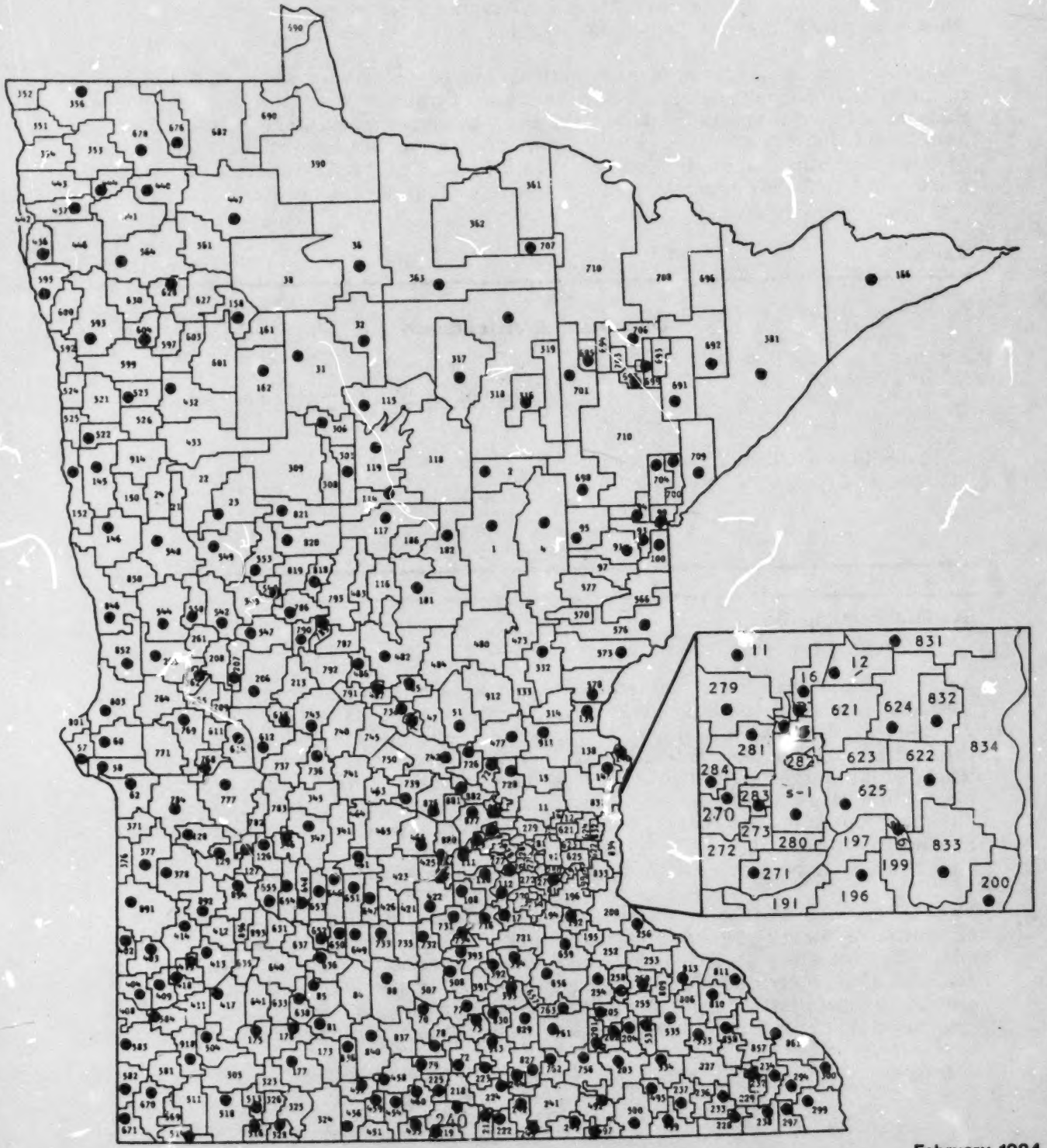
Student Participation

Table 3 shows that the estimated number of K-12 students who participated in the Dialogue was approximately 173,000. Teachers were asked to give students in grades 9-12 the same Response Form used with adults. Since those questions were considered too complex for students in lower grades, a different procedure was used for kindergarten-8th grade. Teachers in these lower grades were asked to moderate a class discussion and record student comments without seeking consensus or judgment. Students in grades 5-8 were asked questions about changes needed in schools and what graduates should know; students in K-4 were asked only one question about changes needed in school (see Appendix C).

In order to include representation from every school district that had student participants, a stratified sampling procedure for the student response group was adapted from that used by the Statewide Assessment Program. School district responses were divided into six categories based on size of enrollment. Each participating school district contributed to the student sample. Except for the category comprised of the three cities of the first class (Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth), each category was well represented.

Figure 1

School Districts Participating in Minnesota Dialogue on Education Town Meetings



February 1984

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Table 3

Student Participation by Grade Level

Grade Level	Number of Students	Number of Districts
9-12	52,200	220
5-8	76,100*	256
K-4	44,500*	227
Unduplicated Totals	172,800	290

*Number of participating classrooms have been multiplied by state average students/classroom (21:1).

Participant Profile Information

The Dialogue Response Forms received contained demographic information about the participants. Following is a summary of the age distribution, education level, and parental status of the general population of participants in the Dialogue. Included are participant groups A-C (see Table 1).

Age Distribution. Table 4 lists the number and percentage of this consolidated group of participants by seven different age intervals. A total of 12,181 persons answered this Response Form question, with 63% between 31-50 years old.

Table 4

Age Distribution of General Population Respondents (N = 12,181)

Age Interval	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Under 21	865	7%
21-30	1,486	12%
31-40	4,685	38%
41-50	3,084	25%
51-60	1,433	12%
61-70	460	4%
Over 71	168	1%
Totals	12,181	99%*

*Percent total is less than 100 due to rounding.

Educational Level. The education level for the 10,495 general population respondents who answered this item was collected on the Response Form in terms of the number of years of school attended (see Table 5). The most significant finding was that 51 percent of the group had 16 or more years of education. Since 16 years is usually interpreted as a baccalaureate level, it appears that the respondents in the Dialogue have more college experience than would be found in the general population. A total of 4 percent of these respondents indicated they had fewer than 12 years of education, which is presumed to be the minimum requirement for high school graduation.

Table 5

Years of School Attendance by General Population (N = 10,462)

Years Attended School	Number of Respondents	Percent
Under 6	35	0
6	19	0
7	21	0
8	106	1%
9	78	1%
10	131	1%
11	200	2%
12	1,971	19%
13	1,149	11%
14	863	8%
15	469	4%
16	1,600	15%
17 or more	3,820	37%
Total	10,462	99%*

*Percent total is less than 100 due to rounding.

Parental Status. The parental status of the general population was determined by responses to all the parental status choices shown in Table 6. A majority of the participants responding to this item were parents of children who are or who have been enrolled in public schools. However, 15% had no children and at least 5% had children enrolled in nonpublic schools. The number of respondents in Table 6 represents a multiple count because more than one category could apply to a person.

Table 6

Parental Status of General Population Respondents (N = 12,672)

Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents*	Parental Status
1,896	15%	No children
1,737	14%	Children not yet in school
568	4%	Children in public preschool
440	3%	Children in nonpublic preschool
6,348	50%	Children in public school grades K-12
656	5%	Children in nonpublic school grades K-12
3,174	25%	Children who completed public high school
232	2%	Children who completed nonpublic high school
200	2%	Children who dropped out before graduation

* The percentages add to more than 100% because parents could check more than one category.

Perceived Value of the Dialogue

The Dialogue Response Form had two items that sought feedback about the value of the Dialogue. The participants were asked if they thought the Dialogue was a valuable experience and would they participate again. Table 7 shows that 90 percent of the general population respondents who answered this item thought it was valuable and 93 percent would participate again. A lower percentage of students considered it valuable as 69 percent and 77 percent said they would participate again.

Table 7

Perceived Value of the Dialogue by Participants

Participants	Number and (%) Rating Dialogue Valuable		Number and (%) That Would Participate Again	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
General Population	9,264	(90%)	9,368	(93%)
High School Students	7,012	(69%)	7,825	(77%)

Chapter Three

CONTENT ANALYSIS

A. ANALYSIS BY RESPONSE FORM ITEM

1. The Purpose of Education

Item 4A of the Dialogue Response Form invited participants to rate a given set of twelve "Purpose of Education" statements (see Appendix A) on a priority scale from high priority (5) to low priority (1). Respondents could write in additional priority statements if they wished. Table 8 displays the means of the priority ranking for two respondent groups--general population and students. The general population respondent group includes participant groups A, B, and C (see Table 1) and the student respondent group represents participant group E, students in grades 9-12 only. All individual response forms for the general population respondent group received by April 4, 1984, were processed. This represents a total of 12,672 respondents. Similarly, a total of 10,341 student (9-12) response forms were processed for analysis regarding the Purpose of Education item.

In the response form section titled "Purpose of Education," respondents were asked on item 4B to select the five highest Purpose of Education statements from the list given in item 4A. Respondents rank ordered their five selections from "Highest" to "5th Highest" in order of perceived importance. Tables 9A and 9B display the results of this selection and ranking process for the two respondent groups--general population and students (9-12).

Analysis statements for Purpose of Education results follow:

a. For both respondent groups, the two most popular Purpose of Education statements include the development of basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing) and the purpose of learning to think, solve problems, and make decisions.

b. General population respondents rated all purpose statements above the mid-point (3.0) on the five-point priority rating scale (see Table 8) indicating a relatively high appreciation of all twelve statements. However, as evidenced by Table 9A, when required to select and rank order the five most important statements, only five of the twelve statements received recognition by one-third or more of the respondents. That is, the first five purpose statements listed on Table 9A were selected by 41 percent or more general population

Table 8

Priority Ratings of Purpose of Education Statements
(Survey Item 4A)

Purpose Statements	MEAN PRIORITY RATING ON A 5 POINT SCALE (5 = high priority, 1 = low priority) General Population Respondents N = 12,672 Mean (Rank)	Students (9-12) N = 10,341 Mean (Rank)
To develop basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing).	4.94 (1)	4.79 (1)
To learn to think, solve problems, and make decisions.	4.86 (2)	4.64 (2)
To provide the opportunity for each student to develop his/her individual potential.	4.49 (3)	4.34 (4)
"Other" - Respondent's own statement.	4.43 (4)	4.24 (7)
To prepare for future learning.	4.42 (5)	4.33 (5)
To learn how to become a responsible member of our society and how to participate as an informed citizen in our democracy.	4.40 (6)	3.83 (10)
To provide educational opportunities to meet the learning needs of all children (e.g., handicapped, gifted).	4.36 (7)	4.26 (6)
To learn to live and work in the new "information society," where information is valuable and rapidly available.	4.03 (8)	3.87 (9)
To prepare for getting a job.	3.98 (9)	4.38 (3)
To gain an understanding of careers, occupations, and the world of work.	3.93 (10)	4.06 (8)
To prepare to live, do business and work with people from different parts of the world.	3.58 (11)	3.56 (12)
To gain an appreciation of arts, culture and the "great works of mankind."	3.42 (12)	2.99 (13)
To provide for social development through athletics and other extra-curricular activities.	3.25 (13)	3.80 (11)

Table 9A

Selection of the Five Highest Purposes of Education by General Population Respondents
(Survey Item 4B)

Number and Percent Responding N = 12,672

Purpose Statement	Highest Purpose N	(%)	2nd Highest N	(%)	3rd Highest N	(%)	4th Highest N	(%)	5th Highest N	(%)	TOTAL RESPONDENTS N	(%)
To develop basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing).	7,412	(58%)	1,594	(13%)	808	(6%)	410	(3%)	265	(2%)	10,489	(83%)
To learn to think, solve problems, and make decisions.	1,562	(12)	5,507	(43)	1,672	(13)	877	(7)	405	(3)	10,023	(79)
To learn how to become a responsible member of our society and how to participate as an informed citizen in our democracy.	428	(3)	834	(7)	1,777	(14)	1,797	(14)	1,391	(11)	6,227	(49)
To provide the opportunity for each student to develop his/her individual potential.	737	(6)	856	(7)	1,480	(12)	1,661	(13)	1,400	(11)	6,134	(48)
To prepare for future learning.	153	(1)	624	(5)	1,888	(15)	1,289	(10)	1,211	(10)	5,165	(41)
To prepare for getting a job.	127	(1)	463	(4)	975	(8)	1,158	(9)	979	(8)	3,702	(29)
To provide educational opportunities to meet the learning needs of all children (e.g., handicapped, gifted).	204	(2)	415	(3)	655	(5)	935	(7)	1,315	(10)	3,524	(28)
To gain an understanding of careers, occupations, and the world of work.	123	(1)	249	(2)	583	(5)	852	(7)	1,015	(8)	2,822	(22)
To learn to live and work in the new "information society," where information is valuable and rapidly available.	75	(0.6)	188	(1)	551	(4)	778	(6)	880	(7)	2,472	(20)
To gain an appreciation of arts, culture and the "great works of mankind."	34	(0.3)	69	(0.5)	177	(1)	353	(3)	551	(4)	1,184	(9)
To prepare to live, do business and work with people from different parts of the world.	45	(0.4)	91	(0.7)	173	(1)	383	(3)	479	(4)	1,171	(9)
To provide for social development through athletics and other extra-curricular activities.	24	(0.2)	40	(0.3)	126	(1)	212	(2)	580	(5)	982	(8)
"Other" - Respondents' own statements.	142	(1)	100	(0.8)	114	(0.9)	123	(1)	131	(1)	610	(5)

*Note - Item 4B required participants to select and rank five purpose statements from a given list. Statements were ranked from "highest" to "5th highest" in order of importance.

N = Number

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Table 9B

Student (Grades 9-12) Selection of the Five Highest Purposes of Education
(*Survey Item 4B)

Purpose Statement	Number and Percent of Students (9-12) Responding N = 10,341										TOTAL RESPONDENTS	
	Highest Purpose N	(%)	2nd Highest N	(%)	3rd Highest N	(%)	4th Highest N	(%)	5th Highest N	(%)	N	(%)
To develop basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing).	5,423	(52%)	1,096	(11%)	558	(5%)	384	(4%)	372	(4%)	7,833	(76%)
To learn to think, solve problems, and make decisions.	1,044	(10)	3,206	(31)	1,327	(13)	943	(9)	569	(6)	7,089	(69)
To prepare for getting a job.	464	(4)	1,073	(10)	1,359	(13)	1,335	(13)	823	(8)	5,054	(49)
To prepare for future learning.	320	(3)	862	(8)	1,535	(15)	1,094	(11)	896	(9)	4,707	(46)
To provide the opportunity for each student to develop his/her individual potential.	547	(5)	782	(8)	1,080	(10)	1,083	(10)	994	(10)	4,486	(43)
To provide educational opportunities to meet the learning needs of all children (e.g., handicapped, gifted).	198	(2)	460	(4)	646	(6)	879	(9)	968	(9)	3,151	(30)
To gain an understanding of careers, occupations, and the world of work.	214	(2)	350	(3)	649	(6)	780	(8)	1,058	(10)	3,051	(30)
To learn how to become a responsible member of our society and how to participate as an informed citizen in our democracy.	170	(2)	304	(3)	535	(5)	636	(6)	722	(7)	2,367	(23)
To provide for social development through athletics and other extra-curricular activities.	128	(1)	163	(2)	278	(3)	438	(4)	841	(8)	1,848	(18)
To learn to live and work in the new "information society," where information is valuable and rapidly available.	108	(1)	204	(2)	376	(4)	503	(5)	533	(5)	1,724	(17)
To prepare to live, do business and work with people from different parts of the world.	74	(0.7)	155	(1)	240	(2)	363	(4)	450	(4)	1,282	(12)
To gain an appreciation of arts, culture and the "great works of mankind."	34	(0.3)	57	(0.6)	132	(1)	154	(1)	270	(3)	647	(6)
"Other" - Respondents' own statements.	69	(0.7)	69	(0.7)	64	(0.6)	68	(0.7)	69	(0.7)	339	(3)

*Note - Item 4B required participants to select and rank five purpose statements from a given list. Statements were ranked from "highest" to "5th highest" in order of importance.

N = Number

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respondents as being in the category of the five highest purposes of education. Conversely, three purpose statements, 1) appreciation of the arts, 2) interaction with people from different parts of the world, and 3) social development through athletics and extra-curricular activities, were selected as the five highest purposes by 10 percent or fewer of the general population respondents.

c. A total of 1,484 (12%) general population respondents offered "other" purpose statements and rated their statements relatively high in comparison to all other purpose statements. Of those 1,484 submitting other purpose statements, 610 (41%) respondents ranked their "other" purpose statement in the five most important purposes category. A more in-depth analysis of the content of "other" purposes as offered by respondents is being planned at a later date.

d. Student (9-12) respondents rated all purpose statements except one, appreciation of the arts, above the mid-point (3.0) on the 5-point priority rating scale (see Table 8). Table 9B shows that seven of the twelve statements were selected as the five highest purposes by 30 percent or more of the student respondents and only one statement, appreciation of the arts, was selected by fewer than 10 percent of the student respondents.

e. Although ratings and rankings of purpose statements are highest for basic skills and thinking/learning skills purpose areas for the respondent groups, it should be noted that student respondents selected job and career related purpose statements as higher in terms of priority and importance than did the general population respondent group.

2. High School Graduation Competencies

Item three of the Dialogue Response Form sought an open-ended response to the question "What should the Minnesota high school graduate of the '80s (and beyond) know and be able to do as a result of public education?" After previewing over three hundred response forms, a coding sheet was developed listing 21 competency categories or areas into which responses could be coded. A "more" or "less" differentiation was noted as competencies were coded. That is, a distinction was made between those respondents indicating **more** of a particular competency and those wanting **less** of a certain competency.

Table 10A displays competency data for three groups--general population respondents, town meeting small group respondents, and respondents from correctional institutions. The general population response group combines participant groups A and B only (see Table 1). Due to the open-ended nature of item 3 and the large number of general population forms received (12,373), a 17 percent sample (2,093 forms of 12,373 possible) was selected and coded. All responses (299 forms) from participation group C, correctional institution respondents, were coded and are displayed separately since their inclusion in the general population respondent group sample (2,093 forms) would have weighted those responses significantly as they represent 13 percent of the total general population group. All 762 town meeting small group response forms were coded as well as all 299 correctional institution response forms.

Table 10A

Number and Percent of Respondents Desiring More or Less of Selected High School Graduation Competencies

Competency Areas	General Population Respondents N = 2,093				Town Meeting Small Groups N = 762				Correctional Institution Respondents N = 299			
	More		Less		More		Less		More		Less	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Reading	1,353	(65%)	8	(0.4%)	466	(61%)	3	(0.4%)	141	(47%)	0	0
Math	1,283	(61)	6	(0.3)	430	(57)	2	(0.4)	151	(51)	0	0
Language Arts	1,275	(61)	4	(0.2)	464	(61)	2	(0.4)	133	(44)	0	0
Effective Communication	1,184	(57)	6	(0.3)	482	(63)	0	0	85	(28)	0	0
Preparation for Responsible Citizenship	673	(32)	1	(0.1)	256	(34)	4	(1)	47	(16)	0	0
Preparation for Career	499	(24)	3	(0.2)	132	(17)	3	(0.4)	72	(24)	0	0
Computer & High Technology	377	(18)	5	(0.2)	303	(40)	9	(1)	31	(10)	0	0
Science	301	(14)	1	(0.1)	94	(12)	0	0	41	(14)	0	0
Decision Making/ Critical Thinking	276	(13)	0	0	50	(7)	1	(0.2)	28	(9)	3	(1%)
Social Studies	266	(13)	3	(0.2)	78	(10)	1	(0.2)	25	(8)	0	0
Foreign Languages	211	(10)	2	(0.1)	239	(31)	10	(1)	5	(2)	0	0
Government	210	(10)	0	0	62	(8)	0	0	7	(2)	0	0
Vocational Courses	185	(9)	5	(0.2)	59	(8)	5	(1)	29	(10)	0	0
Cultural Awareness	155	(7)	1	(0.1)	103	(14)	0	0	1	(0.3)	0	0
Global Perspective	142	(7)	0	0	154	(20)	2	(0.4)	4	(1)	0	0
Art	122	(6)	1	(0.1)	53	(7)	0	0	3	(1)	0	0
Rules of Conduct	105	(5)	0	0	58	(8)	0	0	13	(4)	0	0
Music	85	(4)	1	(0.1)	33	(4)	1	(0.2)	1	(0.3)	0	0
Health Awareness	58	(3)	0	0	29	(4)	0	0	3	(1)	0	0
Physical Ed./Fitness	51	(2)	6	(0.3)	18	(2)	3	(0.4)	2	(0.7)	0	0
Other	192	(9)	7	(0.3)	211	(28)	3	(0.4)	25	(8)	20	(7)

N = Number

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Student data for the graduation competency response item were processed in the same manner as general population data. That is, samples were selected and responses were coded into competency areas. However, after previewing approximately four hundred student forms, a modified coding list of 21 competency categories was developed for grade 9-12 students and a list of 23 categories was developed for grade 5-8 student respondents. Many categories were identical between the two student groups. A 21 percent sample of 9-12 student forms and a 29 percent sample of 5-8 student forms were selected and processed. Table 10B displays the results of the coding process for students and also illustrates differences in the coding categories among the two student participation groups.

Analysis statements for Table 10A and 10B follow:

a. Competency areas relating to basic skills dominated the responses for all groups. More or increased emphasis on reading, math, language arts, and communications as competency areas were noted with great frequency. In most cases, the total percent of the respondent group reporting these competency areas was over 50 percent.

b. With the exception of reading, math, language arts, and communications as mentioned above, all remaining competency areas were noted by less than one-third of the respondents for respondent groups of general population, corrections, and 9-12 students. However, other respondent groups noted some competency areas with frequencies greater than 33 percent. For example, forty percent of the town meeting small group respondents (groups not individuals) noted computer/high technology as a competency area and 34 percent noted preparation for responsible citizenship as needed. More than one-third of student (grades 5-8) respondents noted the following competency areas as needed -- computer/high technology (60 percent), living/coping skills (49 percent), preparation for careers (42 percent), consumer education (38 percent), social studies (36 percent), foreign language (36 percent), and science (35 percent).

c. Although all responses were coded as desiring "more" or "less" of a specific competency, the quantity of respondents noting "less" of any competency was extremely low. Responses were uniformly on the "more" side reflecting the need for competencies in those areas as opposed to the elimination of certain competency areas.

d. The two student respondent groups (grades 9-12 and grades 5-8) mentioned career, vocational, and life skills competencies more frequently than the general population, small group and corrections respondents. Conversely, academic or basic skills competencies were mentioned more frequently by the latter three respondent groups than by students.

3. Involvement in Educational Decision Making

Dialogue Response Form item 5 solicited respondent perceptions of the degree of ideal involvement in educational decision making for nine selected groups. Involvement was rated on a six point scale ranging from "high

Table 10B

Number and Percent of Students Desiring More or Less of Selected High School Graduation Competencies

Competency Areas	Students, Grades 9-12 N = 2,184				Students, Grades 5-8 N = 1,080			
	More		Less		More		Less	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Math	1,126	(52%)	3	(0.1%)	737	(68%)	3	(0.3%)
Reading	1,093	(50)	3	(0.1)	678	(63)	1	(0.1)
Language Arts	1,071	(49)	3	(0.1)	703	(65)	2	(0.2)
Effective Communication	921	(43)	1	(0.1)	NA		NA	
Preparation for Career	369	(17)	0		454	(42)	0	
Computer & High Technology	349	(15)	1	(0.1)	643	(60)	0	
Science	319	(15)	1	(0.1)	374	(35)	2	(0.2)
Preparation for Responsible Citizenship	314	(14)	0		174	(16)	0	
Social Studies	254	(12)	1	(0.1)	388	(36)	7	(0.6)
Decision Making/Critical Thinking	153	(7)	1	(0.1)	115	(11)	0	
Foreign Languages	149	(7)	1	(0.1)	385	(36)	2	(0.2)
Vocational Courses	134	(6)	0		NA		NA	
Government	128	(6)	0		NA		NA	
Global Perspective	47	(2)	0		NA		NA	
Cultural Awareness	34	(2)	0		NA		NA	
Rules of Conduct	33	(2)	0		NA		NA	
Art	26	(1)	0		65	(6)	4	(0.4)
Health Awareness	23	(1)	0		258	(24)	1	(0.1)
Physical Ed./Fitness	19	(1)	1	(0.1)	120	(11)	11	(1)
Music	17	(1)	0		55	(5)	8	(0.7)
Preparation for College	NA		NA		131	(12)	0	
Typing	NA		NA		184	(17)	0	
Drivers Education	NA		NA		276	(26)	0	
Extra Curricular Activities	NA		NA		23	(2)	1	(0.1)
Living/Coping Skills	NA		NA		531	(49)	0	
Parenting/Child Care	NA		NA		166	(15)	0	
Consumer Education	NA		NA		406	(38)	0	
Self Confidence/Esteem	NA		NA		176	(16)	0	
Other	122	(6)	1	(0.1)	146	(14)	2	(0.2)

NOTE - NA (not applicable) means the competency area was not a coding category for that student group.

N = Number

involvement = 5" to "no involvement = 0." Table 11 displays the results of the ideal involvement ratings for all general population respondents (participant groups A, B, and C, see Table 1) and all student respondents (grades 9-12).

The following analysis statements are made for Table 11 results:

a. With one notable exception, the rank ordering of ideal involvement is relatively similar between the respondent groups. For both respondent groups, parents, teachers, and local school boards appear within the top four groups in terms of ideal involvement in educational decision making. Whereas general population respondents selected parents as the group to have the highest degree of involvement (in an ideal sense), student respondents viewed learners as the group to have the highest degree of involvement, ideally.

b. Both respondent groups rated groups of districts, business, and the federal government as having a lesser amount of ideal involvement than the other six potentially involved groups.

4. Instructional Time

Several issues were raised by Dialogue Response Form item number 2 regarding the duration and intervals of public education. Item 2A asked respondents to select the ideal beginning and ending points of public education on a continuum of student age. Table 12 displays the perceptions of general population respondents and students (grade 9-12) about the ages children should begin and end public school. The general population respondent group includes all respondents from participation groups A, B, and C (see page 6), a total of 12,672 respondents. The student respondent group includes a total of 10,162 individual response forms from 9th-12th graders.

Dialogue Response Form items 2B through 2E asked respondents to share their perceptions concerning the current amount of instructional time in public school as well as perceptions about the ideal length of the school day, week, and year. Table 13 displays these perceptions for the general population respondents (same participation group composition as above) and students, grades 9 through 12.

Analysis statements for education intervals follow:

a. General population and student respondents preferred the current starting age of 5 (62% and 55% respectively) with moderate recommendations for 4 or 6 years of age (13% for 4 years and 20% for 6 years).

b. Similar majorities of general population respondents and students favored the traditional age at graduation of 18 years (60% and 62%). Fourteen percent of general population respondents recommended ending public education at 20 years of age compared with 6 percent of students.

Table 11

Perceived Degree of Ideal Involvement in Educational Decision Making

Involved Group	General Population Respondents N = 12,672 *Mean Involvement Rating	**Rank	Student (9-12) Respondents N = 10,341 *Mean Involvement Rating	**Rank
Parents	4.45	1	4.03	2
Teachers	4.38	2	4.02	3
Local School Board	4.26	3	3.98	4
School Building Administrators	3.99	4	3.54	6
Learners	3.65	5	4.46	1
State Government	3.48	6	3.65	5
Groups of Districts	3.05	7	3.13	8
Business	2.92	8	2.87	9
Federal Government	2.67	9	3.15	7

* Mean Involvement Rating - The average rating based on a 6-point scale from 5 = highest level of involvement, to 0 = no involvement.

**Rank - Simple ranking of mean involvement ratings.

Table 12

Perceptions of the Ages Children Should Begin and End Public School
(Percent of Respondents)

Group	AGE CHILDREN SHOULD BEGIN SCHOOL						AGE CHILDREN SHOULD END SCHOOL									
	3 or below	4	5	6	7	8 or over	11 or below	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20 or over
General Population Respondents N = 12,672	6%	13%	62%	16%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	4%	9%	60%	9%	14%
Students Grades 9-12 N = 10,341	6%	20%	58%	14%	2%			1%			1%	5%	18%	62%	6%	6%

Table 13

Perceptions of Current Instructional Time and the Length of School Day, Week and Year (Percent of Respondents)

Group	Increased Instructional Time		Length of School Day (hours)					Length of School Week (days)				Length of School Year (months)				
	Yes	No	5	6	7	8	Other	3	4	5	Other	8 or less	9	10	11	12
General Population Respondents N = 12,672	39%	61%	3%	43%	40%	11%	2%	1%	7%	91%	1%	3%	72%	19%	3%	3%
Students (Grades 9-12) N = 10,341	16%	83%	15%	43%	31%	8%	2%	3%	35%	61%	1%	25%	68%	5%	1%	1%

c. The majority of general population respondents (61%) and students (83%) did not favor an increase in instructional time, but students felt more strongly about it. Over one-third (39%) of the general population respondents did favor increased instructional time.

d. Both groups had very similar recommendations for the length of the school day in favoring 6 or 7 hours per day.

e. General population respondents overwhelmingly recommended a 5-day school week at 91 percent, with students somewhat divided between 4 and 5 days (35% vs. 61% respectively).

f. Similar percentages of general population respondents and students favored the current 9 month school year (72% and 68%), but there are differences shown by the remaining respondents. Nineteen percent of the general population respondents recommended a 10 month year, compared to 5 percent of the students. Only 3 percent of the general population respondents favored a school year less than 9 months, while 25 percent of the students did.

5. Educational Change

Item 6 on the Dialogue Response Form asked participants to list their recommendations for change in Minnesota public education. This was an open-ended response item and, following a preview of over three hundred response forms, a list of thirty-one possible change categories was developed for coding responses. This coding list was used for tallying responses from general population respondents, town meeting small groups, and correctional institution respondents. Similar to the graduation competency item (see Chapter III, section 2), an "increase" or "decrease" differentiation was noted as change categories were coded. That is, a distinction was made between those respondents indicating that they desired an **increase** in a particular change area, and those desiring less of or a **decrease** in a specific change area. Also, a coding list was developed for each student respondent group -- grades 9-12, 5-8, and K-4. Most of the coded change categories were identical for the three student respondent groups. Differences in the coding categories are noted in Table 14B.

Because this item was open-ended in nature, samples of the larger respondent groups were drawn for coding. A 17 percent sample of response forms was selected and coded for the general public respondent group which included participant groups A and B only (see page 6). A 29 percent sample was taken for students (5-8), and a 50 percent sample was taken for students (K-4). As explained in Chapter II, responses from the K-8 student group were collected through teacher-facilitated classroom discussions.

Table 14A displays the number and percent of general population respondents, town meeting small groups, and correctional institution respondents desiring specific educational changes. Table 14B has essentially the same format as 14A but shows results for three student respondent groups: 9-12 students, 5-8 students, and K-4 students.

Table 14A

Number and Percent of Respondents Other Than Students Desiring Educational Changes In Coded Content Areas

Coded Categories of Change	General Population Respondents N = 2,093				Town Meeting Small Groups N = 762				Correctional Institution Respondents N = 299			
	Increase		Decrease		Increase		Decrease		Increase		Decrease	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Basic Skills	298	(14%)	1	(0.1%)	195	(26%)	4	(0.5%)	16	(5%)	0	
Teacher Training/Quality	273	(13)	1	(0.1)	162	(21)	2	(0.3)	38	(13)	0	
Student Discipline	227	(11)	4	(0.2)	127	(17)	3	(0.4)	3	(0.9)	11	(4%)
Student Competency Testing	213	(10)	7	(0.3)	137	(18)	0		4	(1)	0	
Parent/Community Involvement	189	(9)	4	(0.2)	175	(23)	5	(0.7)	8	(3)	0	
Funding For Education	158	(8)	18	(1)	138	(18)	0		3	(0.9)	0	
Teacher Pay/Benefits	152	(7)	17	(1)	89	(12)	1	(0.1)	5	(2)	0	
Gifted Education	103	(5)	6	(0.3)	125	(16)	2	(0.3)	1	(0.3)	0	
School Day/Week/Year	100	(5)	22	(1)	20	(3)	2	(0.3)	25	(8)	12	(4)
Other Curriculum Offerings	98	(5)	39	(2)	70	(9)	18	(2)	1	(0.3)	10	(3)
Teacher Status	86	(4)	7	(0.3)	44	(6)	1	(0.1)	1	(0.3)	1	(0.3)
Local Control	83	(4)	13	(1)	57	(7)	2	(0.3)	1	(0.3)	0	
School/Community Involvement	70	(3)	3	(0.1)	92	(12)	0		4	(1)	1	(0.3)
Prayer/Religious Values	70	(3)	4	(0.2)	11	(1)	2	(0.3)	3	(0.9)	1	(0.3)
Decision Making/Critical Thinking	63	(3)	3	(0.1)	23	(3)	2	(0.3)	30	10)	0	
Computer/High Technology	59	(3)	4	(0.2)	101	(13)	5	(0.7)	1	(0.3)	0	
State Role	54	(3)	37	(2)	11	(1)	32	(4)	2	(0.6)	0	
Student Services	49	(2)	2	(0.1)	19	(2)	1	(0.1)	5	(2)	0	
Science	47	(2)	1	(0.1)	36	(5)	0		2	(0.6)	0	
Responsible Citizenship	47	(2)	1	(0.1)	47	(6)	0		6	(2)	0	
Post High School Preparation	39	(2)	1	(0.1)	16	(2)	3	(0.4)	6	(2)	0	
School Rules	38	(2)	5	(0.2)	19	(2)	1	(0.1)	1	(0.3)	0	
Cultural Awareness	36	(2)	2	(0.1)	31	(4)	0		4	(1)	0	
Communication Skills	33	(2)	0		54	(7)	0		5	(2)	0	
Other Extra-Curricular Activities	30	(1)	73	(3)	17	(2)	37	(5)	2	(0.6)	1	(0.3)
Class Size	27	(1)	92	(4)	18	(2)	58	(8)	9	(3)	1	(0.3)
Athletics	16	(1)	137	(7)	16	(2)	55	(7)	2	(0.6)	2	(0.6)
Teacher Tenure	15	(1)	79	(4)	18	(2)	29	(4)	1	(0.3)	0	
Teacher Strikes	10	(0.5)	61	(3)	4	(1)	19	(2)	1	(0.3)	0	
Other Areas	339	(16)	59	(3)	223	(29)	12	(2)	3	(0.9)	23	(8)

N = Number

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Table 14B

Number and Percent of Student Respondents Desiring Educational Changes In Coded Content Areas

Coded Categories of Change	9-12 Students N = 2,184				5-8 Students N = 1,060				K-4 Students N = 1,098			
	Increase		Decrease		Increase		Decrease		Increase		Decrease	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Basic Skills	96	(4%)	7	(0.3%)	NA				NA			
Teacher Training/Quality	192	(9)	0		NA				NA			
Student Discipline	71	(3)	33	(2)	198	(18%)	16	(1%)	356	(32%)	12	(1%)
Student Competency Testing	50	(2)	1	(0.1)	70	(6)	7	(0.1)	32	(3)	0	
Parent/Community Involvement	14	(0.6)	0		NA				NA			
Funding For Education	54	(2)	1	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Teacher Pay/Benefits	29	(1)	3	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Gifted Education	18	(0.8)	0		72	(7)	3	(0.1)	37	(3)	0	
School Day/Week/Year	96	(4)	136	(6)	NA				NA			
Other Curriculum Offerings	159	(7)	17	(1)	221	(20)	9	(1)	173	(16)	0	
Teacher Status	13	(0.6)	0		NA				NA			
Cultural Awareness	8	(0.4)	1	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Local Control	3	(0.1)	2	(0.1)	NA				NA			
School/Community Involvement	10	(0.5)	2	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Prayer/Religious Values	4	(0.2)	1	(0.1)	15	(1)	2	(0.1)	21	(2)	0	
Computer/High Technology	40	(2)	1	(0.1)	791	(73)	2	(0.1)	584	(53)	1	(0.1)
State Role	6	(0.3)	2	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Student Services	49	(2)	2	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Science	26	(1)	2	(0.1)	236	(22)	9	(1)	284	(26)	2	(0.1)
Responsible Citizenship	9	(0.4)	0		NA				NA			
Post High School Preparation	5	(0.2)	0		NA				NA			
School Rules	36	(2)	16	(0.7)	NA				NA			
Communication Skills	8	(0.4)	1	(0.1)	NA				NA			
Other Extra-Curricular Activities	24	(1)	11	(0.5)	136	(13)	10	(1)	153	(14)	3	(0.1)
Class Size	8	(0.4)	49	(2)	NA				NA			
Athletics	18	(0.8)	24	(1)	NA				NA			
Teacher Tenure	7	(0.3)	9	(0.4)	NA				NA			
Teacher Strikes	0		4	(0.2)	NA				NA			
Decision Making/Critical Thinking	14	(0.6)	0		42	(4)	1	(0.1)	53	(5)	1	(0.1)
Other Areas	228	(10)	28	(1)	237	(22)	12	(1)	257	(23)	2	(0.1)
Reading	NA		NA		205	(19)	8	(1)	406	(37)	12	(1)
Language Arts	NA		NA		209	(19)	8	(1)	269	(24)	6	(1)
Math	NA		NA		312	(29)	7	(1)	414	(38)	8	(1)
Foreign Language	NA		NA		302	(28)	5	(0.1)	186	(17)	0	
Physical Education	NA		NA		156	(14)	47	(4)	291	(27)	10	(1)
Art	NA		NA		109	(10)	30	(3)	270	(25)	7	(1)
Music	NA		NA		69	(6)	38	(4)	142	(13)	7	(1)
Global Perspective	NA		NA		64	(6)	0		76	(7)	0	
Career Education/Occupations Information	NA		NA		259	(24)	0		152	(14)	0	
Drug Education	NA		NA		53	(5)	0		26	(2)	0	
Homework/Academic Expectations	NA		NA		104	(10)	48	(4)	275	(25)	19	(2)
Time in School/Learning	NA		NA		188	(17)	80	(7)	325	(30)	65	(6)
Books	NA		NA		151	(14)	3	(0.1)	266	(24)	3	(0.1)
Teachers/Kinds of Teachers	NA		NA		190	(18)	1	(0.1)	217	(20)	2	(0.1)
School Space/Facilities	NA		NA		152	(14)	9	(1)	310	(28)	2	(0.1)
Lunches/Quantity & Quality	NA		NA		154	(14)	3	(0.1)	145	(13)	1	(0.1)
Social Studies	NA		NA		130	(12)	23	(2)	171	(16)	4	(0.1)
Other Concerns Specific to Local Classroom/School	NA		NA		156	(14)	0		275	(25)	0	

NOTE - NA (Not Applicable) means the change area was not a coding cateogry for that student group.

N = Number

The following analysis statements are made for Tables 14A and 14B:

a. General population respondents show no more than 14 percent agreement for any specific change. The top recommendations from general population respondents were to increase emphasis on basic skills (14%), improve teacher training and quality (13%), increase student discipline (11%), increase student competency testing (10%) and increase parent/community involvement (9%).

b. When the town meeting participants met in small groups, there was more agreement on several recommendations. Increasing emphasis on basic skills rose to 26 percent, parent/community involvement rose to 23 percent, improving teacher quality went up to 21 percent, student competency testing went up to 18 percent, and increasing emphasis on gifted education went from 5 percent for general population respondents to 16 percent for small groups.

c. The correctional institution respondents also showed little agreement on recommended changes with no item higher than 13 percent. The top recommendations for this group were to increase teacher quality (13%), improve students' decision making and critical thinking (10%), and increase the length of school time (8%).

d. Students in grades 9-12 also showed a low degree of consensus on recommended changes with no item getting more than 9 percent agreement from the group. The highest areas were to increase teacher training (9%), increase other curriculum offerings (7%), and decrease the length of school time (6%).

e. Students in grades K-8 were far more in agreement on many recommended changes compared with the other respondent groups. Students in grades 5-8 had 73 percent agreement for increasing computer literacy. This group revealed 20 areas which had 10-29 percent agreement. The K-4 group showed 53 percent agreement for increasing computer literacy, and 21 areas which had 13-38 percent agreement.

f. Students in grades 5-8 recommended increasing math (29%), physical education (28%), career education (24%), and science (22%).

g. Students in grades K-4 recommended increasing math (38%), reading (37%), student discipline (32%), time in school (30%), school space/facilities (28%), physical education (77%), and science (26%).

B. ANALYSIS OF OTHER DATA

1. Town Meeting Open-Mike Results

The Town Meeting Manual suggested that open-mike sessions be conducted as an unstructured component of the local school district town meeting. During these sessions, individuals were given the opportunity to present spontaneous opinions, comments, concerns or recommendations related to public education. Town meeting local contact persons were asked to send the audio tapes to the Department of Education.

Ninety-seven audio tapes were heard by Department of Education staff and comments were summarized by the staff on open-ended forms designed for this purpose. In contrast to the written dialogue response form format, the tapes presented a different perspective on public concerns for education and the need for educational change.

Approximately 1,100 commentors were noted by the tape reviewers. However, some commentors spoke two or more times during the course of the tape. Reviewers noted that in a few instances commentors presented prepared remarks but, in most instances, comments seemed to be made rather spontaneously in response to points brought out by other open-mike presenters, or in response to discussion in their small group sessions. Reviewers reported that commentors seemed positive and optimistic and that commentors were serious and genuinely concerned about the issues they chose to speak about. There appeared to be a balance between the discussion of local concerns and issues and discussions of state or national level issues. Some comments from Department of Education staff who reviewed the tapes follow:

> "It seemed as if commentors were talking to us directly, knowing that we would be listening and hoping that specific action relating to their concerns would be taken."
>
> "Commentors' expectations were high -- expectations for future action."
>
> "Commentors spoke with intensity, seriousness, and candor."
>
> "After listening to one tape I felt a sense of involvement in the town meeting and the need to respond to the group."
>
> "If one of the purposes of the Dialogue was to raise issues, as opposed to solving them, the open-mike sessions I listened to were successful. Many controversial issues were identified."

The actual issues discussed by open-mike commentors were wide ranging and not without contradiction. For example, it was noted by one reviewer that one commentor who pointed out the need for increased educational dollars was followed by a commentor stating that the answer to educational problems was not funds, but a more demanding curriculum without the "frills" of elective, non-basic skill oriented courses. The topics listed below represent only a small sample of the many issues and concerns noted on the tapes and are intended to give the reader an awareness of the variety of issues presented during the town meeting open-mike sessions. They are not in any priority order.

A. Return to basic skills emphasis.

B. Increased parent-school involvement needed.

C. Tougher graduation requirements.

D. Greater responsibility on students for learning.

E. Lack of funds to improve the educational process.

F. Unfairness in funding between large and small districts.

G. Preschool programs needed.

H. Summer school programs needed.

I. Teacher salaries are low in comparison to their great responsibility and work load.

J. Minimum competencies should be established at the local level.

K. Students should be challenged more with coursework and homework.

L. Increase community education programming.

M. Business should be more involved in public, K-12 education.

N. Increase programs for gifted children.

O. Students are not prepared for college.

P. Need to pray for school improvement, moral/religious instruction needed.

Q. Less federal and state involvement, more local control.

R. Eliminate the teacher tenure system.

S. The tenure system is working adequately.

T. Keep kids in school during the school day, not on the street due to flexible programs.

U. Increased training on computers.

V. Make foreign language a requirement.

W. The purpose of schools should be formally established at the local level.

X. Students should learn decision making/problem solving skills.

Y. Entrance exams for high school are needed.

Z. Classes in parenting are needed.

Several tapes also expressed "thank you's" for creating an opportunity for the sharing of concerns about public education. Many questions were raised regarding the future use of Dialogue information. State Department of Education staff who volunteered to listen to tapes noted that the experience, though time-consuming, was both fascinating and enlightening.

2. Dialogue Hotline

During the week of February 13-17, 1984, the Department of Education opened a toll-free "hotline" to provide Minnesotans with an alternative approach to air their concerns about public education in Minnesota. Although many calls were received, most callers were seeking logistical information regarding town meeting locations and procedures. Approximately fifty hotline callers did phone to register their concerns or comments. The comments from these calls were written on Dialogue Response Forms and were included in all data labeled "general population respondent group."

C. ANECDOTAL COMMENTS FROM DIALOGUE PARTICIPANTS

The intent of the Minnesota Dialogue was to provide an opportunity for Minnesota citizens to share their ideas about public education and to make those ideas available to education decision makers and to the public in general. To accomplish this goal Dialogue participants were given a number of options regarding the ways in which they could share ideas, concerns, and comments. Although much information was gathered via structured items on response forms, participants were encouraged to complete open-ended response form items or to offer verbal comments through town meeting open-mike sessions or through a Department-sponsored telephone hotline.

Anecdotal comments are presented for the following reasons:

1. To give the reader an impression of the mood, tone or feeling with which Dialogue participants shared their concerns about public education, and

2. To present some of the many issues and concerns which participants wished to share with educational decision makers.

Comments described below have been grouped into general topic areas for reading convenience. However, the reader is cautioned that these selected comments are **not** representative of the topic area or of all anecdotal comments due to the fact that only a small percentage of comments are presented here. For this reason the content of individual comments given below cannot be synthesized into generalizations about the broad topic areas. Although some degree of balance of opinion was sought as comments were selected, no particular attention was given to searching out comments which would support or refute any existing policies or prevailing attitudes. Comments should be read and treated as individual statements of personal concern only, and not weighed in terms of other comments presented in the same topic area.

General Topic - **Educational Finance/Funding**

"If education is a governmental priority, more funds should be made available."

"It is easy to talk about improvements but if money is not provided it does no good to talk."

"I favor a voucher system making money available to all parents. Right now parents' wishes are totally disregarded."

"Offer tax incentives for businesses to provide resources to schools. This way we might be able to reduce the tax burden and lower the cost of public education."

"State should fund more preschool education and smaller class sizes for elementary schools."

"More money placed in education will reduce tax levels through less welfare, better and more jobs, less unemployment and better physical and mental health."

Educational Finance/Funding (Continued)

"Our schools are doing fine and offer many good programs. State should provide adequate money to continue excellence and to reinstate programs lost due to cutbacks of the last few years."

"I think we need to make our educational system more fiscally responsible and not just pour more money into it."

General Topic - **Innovative Ideas/Suggestions**

"Encourage school districts, faculties, and universities to begin discussing some of the critical issues raised by this Dialogue. What is the purpose of education anyway?"

"We need teacher entrance examinations, higher salaries for teachers and superintendent review of tenured teachers."

"Get local advocacy by door-to-door, neighbor-to-neighbor invitation as well as media advertisement for involvement."

"I agree whole heartedly with the concept of individual education plans for every student."

"Schools should be redistricted with workable boundaries."

"Competency testing is needed starting in 6th grade."

"Use technology to provide education at home, at least part-time."

"High school graduate follow-up studies should be conducted to see if programs are preparing students for college, vo-tech, or employment."

"There should be four types of diplomas awarded. 1) Base level, passed all requirements, 2) Intermediate, average GPA and test results, 3) Accelerated, above average achievement, 4) Master Diploma, outstanding achievement."

"Reward academic excellence more."

"School board members should have a paid position with time for information gathering. Board members should be in schools to see what is really going on."

"Let honor students evaluate teachers."

General Topic - **Gifted and Special Education**

"I believe the average student and the gifted are being discriminated against by the emphasis on providing for the SLD and handicapped children."

Gifted and Special Education (Continued)

"The gifted child has within himself the ability to reach his potential. The handicapped child does not. Funding should not be increased for the gifted while more is needed for the handicapped."

"There should be as many extras available for the gifted as there are for the handicapped."

"Early identification of the needs of handicapped or gifted students would be beneficial in the long run."

"I am concerned about all this interest in the gifted. Their needs are not as great as other areas where there are problems."

"Special education for slow learners should be made available to public and nonpublic schools so students can receive instruction in their own school."

General Topic - **Instructional Time**

"The important point is **quality** during school hours not merely quantity of school time."

"More instructional time is needed through cutting down study hall time, frivolous activities, classroom interruptions, on-the-job training, etc."

"Emphasis should be placed on participation in and enjoyment of the student's material or activity and instructional time should be increased according to the student's level of performance."

"Eliminate alternate day kindergarten and increase it to all day, every day."

"Have the staff stay longer to prepare for classes. Students, also, if they are not prepared. Allow only one month for vacation."

"Computers don't have a place in elementary school if it means cutting time in basic areas. Math has been mentioned in cutting time in order to cram in computer work."

"I hope the length of the school week is not increased. I see how 'burned out' our students become. We need to teach our children how to do every day basics while they are home."

"I agree that there is a need for more instructional time, but first we have to ask ourselves if we are using the present time wisely. There is just so much a child can take as far as stress involved in intense learning."

General Topic - **Teacher Concerns (Quality, Salary, Etc.)**

"Teachers should be paid more and incompetent teachers weeded out."

"Teacher contracts should be signed before school opens in the fall. No state aid should be given until contracts are signed with teachers."

"Pay teachers more so we can get quality and long-term instructors. Too many leaving the profession for higher paying jobs."

"Elementary teachers are assigned too many subjects to teach without proper preparation time. This prep time should be required for elementary teachers by state law or rule."

"Merit pay is needed."

"We need teachers with a definite sense of right and wrong. An 'anything goes' attitude should not be permitted."

"Teacher salaries comparable to jobs in business and industry would attract more applicants from which to select quality teachers. A one year internship would be best."

"State should establish teacher pay scales and make adjustments for experience, education, and cost of living."

"What can be done about 'burnt out' teachers who are protected by tenure?"

"Teachers spend too much time testing and not enough time with drill."

General Topic - **Local, State or Federal Control Issues**

"Federal aid should be abolished thereby relieving us of a mountain of paperwork required to account for funds spent. State aid to local districts should be on a no-strings-attached basis."

"Have the student government have as much authority as the school board, state, and federal governments."

"Many in this area feel as strongly as I, and have resorted to non-public schools. We need to get our government out of the schools and get it back to local authorities."

"Less politics, less paperwork."

"Raise standards at the State level so students who are just meeting the minimums will get more."

Local, State or Federal Control Issues (Continued)

"Please! Come to the rescue of small communities like ours. Our good teachers are leaving because of the poor salaries and poor attitude of the school board. Some parents have moved to other communities because of our school district. You must make some decisions for this board because they will not spend their funds to improve our curriculum unless you force them to!"

"I think consolidation or pairing in small communities will be necessary to provide an equal opportunity for kids."

"Laws against teacher strikes should be passed."

"Small town politics should be overridden by responsible decision making from the state level."

"Requirements must be raised at the state level rather than the local level -- as soon as possible."

"In a district of this size, the bureaucrats in government are too removed to understand our classrooms."

"The legislature should allow home-schools where children could be educated until age 8. Parents should have more to say about early training of their children than the government."

General Topic - **Shared Decision Making**

"Planning, Evaluating and Reporting (PER) should be required to be active in every district. The advisory councils need more clout to make local decisions."

"Less input needed from those not directly involved in teaching."

"Parents should assume more responsibility for their students and teach respect."

"Business should not run the schools but a business consultant could have good input into the management of labor, keeping records accurately, and having better financial management."

"As a member of our district's PER committee, I have had the opportunity to get input from parents and school staff. This has been a valuable experience."

"Parents need to get back to supporting teachers by seeing to it that their children are not disruptive in class and are doing their best to participate."

"As long as teacher negotiations remain a local issue, an adversarial relationship will exist between board/teachers/parents and have long-term negative effects on the quality of education."

Shared Decision Making (Continued)

"Help society see that schools are important. With fewer people having children in schools more people are going to refuse to support programs that do not directly meet the needs of society. We need people who can think, read, and make money to pay taxes to support us in our old age, not basketball dribblers."

Genral Topic - **The Dialogue Process**

"I am glad to see a survey such as this given out so we can have the opportunity to speak out. Thank you."

"A lot of good ideas were brought up. We hope the State will take the time to hear them out and consider them."

"Good to hear how other people think and feel."

"It was an opportunity for community to meet to exchange ideas and news with teachers, administrators and board members. I'm sure we all learned new facts about our school, classes, preferences, registration and many other things."

"If you will actually act on and implement the ideas of the public, not just the educators, and try to show us that you really are listening and then acting on these suggestions, the public will develop a feeling that is other than powerlessness and will become more involved, too. Let's do it again!"

"Nothing will come of it."

"I have high expectations and am now forced to realize what a great task and responsibility it is to educate our children to this degree."

"I apprecate the opportunity to express my disappointment with the education in this district. I've attended meetings for years and all it is is talk. I hope this doesn't turn out the same way."

Again, it should be emphasized that the quotes above are only a small sample of the written and verbal comments received through the Dialogue process. Only a small number of comments could be presented here, but they serve to give an overall impression of mood and nature of respondent concerns. Many of the open-ended comments were given in response to items three and six on the Dialogue Response Form (items relating to competency areas and suggested educational changes) and as such were also coded by Department staff readers into the pool of data for those items.

Some broad generalizations concerning the anecdotal comments are offered below:

1. Although some very positive comments were noted, there were comments negative or pessimistic in nature. Where positive statements were expressed, they were often moderated by statements of concern for change needed to correct perceived shortcomings.

2. The variety of anecdotal comments was great. Consensus regarding comment content was not evident. The concerns appeared to be more related to the local school or school district rather than regional or statewide in nature.

3. Not only were comments diverse in content, they were also contradictory in many instances, indicating opposing viewpoints as to the changes needed in schools. For example, whereas some commentors advocated high pay for teachers, others took the opposite view. The call for increased time for instruction was also met with demands for more effective use of less time.

4. A final statement concerning anecdotal comments relates to the Dialogue process itself and the calls for action from participants. There seemed to be many requests for "let's get going, let's act, now that we know what the issues are." Although some commentors expressed pessimism regarding change, most respondents expressed the feeling that the Dialogue was a good first step, at least at the local level, for getting things "on track" again. The pressure for action was felt by Department of Education staff who read the Dialogue Response Forms.

SUMMARY OF KEY RESULTS

The intent of this chapter is to give a brief summary of the key findings from the Minnesota Dialogue on Education. After analyzing the data on citizen participation and involvement, the Dialogue appeared to accomplish its purpose to stimulate discussion about education issues and to collect opinions from Minnesota citizens about future direction for public schools. The following key results statements summarize information regarding Dialogue participation, involvement, and perceptions of value as analyzed in Chapter II:

- Approximately 191,400 individuals were involved in the Dialogue process and provided comments. Of this total, 173,000 were public school students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

- Data collection forms were received from 274 school-hosted town meetings attended by 14,900 persons. A total of 63 percent of all Minnesota school districts held town meetings.

- Participation in the Dialogue was geographically representative of the state as evidenced by the fact that input was received in some form from 388 (89%) of Minnesota's 435 school districts.

- Diverse age distribution and parental status were observed among the respondents. Of the general population respondents, 38 percent were between 31 and 40 years of age with 20 percent under 30 years old and 42 percent over 40 years of age. Half of the general population respondents had children in public school (K-12) and 25 percent had children who completed public school. Also, 8 percent of the general population respondents reported they had children in nonpublic schools (preschool through grade 12), 14 percent had children who were not yet in school, and 15 percent of the respondents had no children.

- Over half of the general population respondents indicated 16 or more years of education and 4 percent reported less than 12 years.

- General population respondents gave a favorable rating of the Dialogue as a valuable experience worth participating in again. Ninety percent rated the experience as valuable and 93 percent said they would participate again if asked. High school students, however, were somewhat less positive since 69 percent agreed and 31 percent disagreed as to the value of the Dialogue and about three-fourths of the students indicated they would participate again if asked.

Chapter III of this report displays and describes results of the Dialogue Response Form as well as other inputs from Dialogue participants. Below are key results synthesized from that content analysis:

- The most frequently selected purpose of education statements were:

    1. To develop basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing), and

    2. To learn to think, solve problems, and make decisions.

  A two-thirds majority of general population respondents (with even more agreement among student respondents) indicated that the quantity of instructional time presently occurring in the schools is adequate. In addition, traditional views regarding when children should begin and end school, 5 to 18 years old respectively, and the length of the school day (6-7 hours), week (5 days), and year (9 months) were supported by most respondents.

- Given these views on educational intervals and purpose as stated above, it is important to recognize other, less dominant trends in the Dialogue results. For example, all twelve purpose of education statements listed on the Dialogue Response Form were rated high in terms of priority. However, when respondents selected the five most important purposes from a given list, the purposes of basic skills and learning to think were selected into that category by over half of all respondent groups and the following five purpose statements were selected into the "high five" category by more than one-third of all respondents:

    1. To learn how to become a responsible member of our society and how to participate as an informed citizen in our democracy;

    2. To provide the opportunity for each student to develop his/her individual potential;

    3. To prepare for future learning;

    4. To prepare for getting a job;

    5. To gain an understanding of careers, occupations, and the world of work.

  Therefore, it appears that basics as well as career preparation and fulfillment of the individual learner are highly regarded. And, although the respondents favored current educational intervals and quantity of instructional time, it would be unwise to discount the fact that over one-third (37%) of the adult respondents indicated instructional time for students should be increased.

- Basic skill-related competency areas were suggested most frequently by respondents when asked to list their beliefs about what Minnesota high school graduates of the '80s (and beyond) should know and be able to do as a result of public education. Specifically, the competencies of reading, math, language arts, and effective communications were suggested by well over half of all respondents. Other suggestions by respondents were numerous and varied in terms of content. Also, there was indication that student-suggested competencies were somewhat more career oriented than those suggested by general population respondents.

- Dialogue participants generally agreed that parents, teachers, and local school boards should be the most involved groups in making decisions regarding public education in Minnesota. Student respondents indicated that learners, as a group, should have the most involvement in educational decision making followed by parent and teacher involvement.

- Increased emphasis on basic skills was established again by general population respondents as the most frequently (14%) mentioned change needed in public education in Minnesota. Other educational changes mentioned most frequently by general population respondents included improved teacher training and quality (13%), increased student discipline (11%), student competency testing (10%), more parent and community involvement (9%), increased funding for education (8%), and improved teacher pay and benefits (7%). Students were more unanimous in their suggestions for change. Younger students (K-8) favored increases in basic skill areas of reading, math, language arts, and subjects such as science, physical education, and foreign language. Also, the K-8 student respondents frequently mentioned increased emphasis on computers and high technology, improved student discipline and more extra-curricular activities as needed educational changes. The list of recommended educational changes for all groups of respondents was extremely varied with little consensus except for those content areas mentioned above.

APPENDICES

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Minnesota Department of Education

Minnesota Dialogue on Education

APPENDIX A

RESPONSE TO DIALOGUE ON EDUCATION

As a Minnesotan, you are invited to share your ideas about the future of public education by completing this "Response To Dialogue On Education". Upon completion, please hand in your response as directed at the end of your local Town Meeting, or turn it in at your local district's superintendent's office. Completed responses may also be mailed to: Minnesota Dialogue On Education, 811 Capitol Square - 550 Cedar, St. Paul, MN 55101. Your participation is important. Thank you for your interest and time.

1. Information About You:

A. In which school district do you reside? _____ (School District Name) _____ (District Number (If Known))

B. Please indicate your age group:

☐ Under 21 ☐ 21 - 30 ☐ 31 - 40 ☐ 41 - 50 ☐ 51 - 60 ☐ 61 - 70 ☐ Over 71

C. Circle the total number of years you have attended school:

Less than 6 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 or more

D. Please complete the following statement (check all that apply):

I have:
- ☐ no children.
- ☐ children not yet in school.
- ☐ children in public pre-school.
- ☐ children in non-public pre-school.
- ☐ children in public school grades K - 12.
- ☐ children in non-public school grades K - 12.
- ☐ children who have completed public high school.
- ☐ children who have completed non-public high school.
- ☐ children who have "dropped-out" before completing high school.

2. Public Education Intervals:

Note: Minnesota school districts currently are in session approximately 175 days (9 months) per school year and the length of the average high school day is approximately 6 hours.

A. At what ages should public education begin and end (please circle the lowest and highest ages)?

Below 3 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 Over 21

B. Should the instructional time in our public schools be increased?

☐ YES ☐ NO

C. The length of the school week should be (circle one):

3 Days 4 Days 5 Days Other: _____

D. The length of the school day should be (circle one):

5 Hours 6 Hours 7 Hours 8 Hours Other: _____

E. The length of the school year should be (circle one):

Less than 9 Months 9 Months 10 Months 11 Months 12 Months

F. Comments:

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3. The Minnesota High School Graduate:

A. What should the Minnesota high school graduate of the 1980's (and beyond) know and be able to as a result of public education (please write comments here - if additional space is necessary, continue your comments following the last question)?

GRADUATES SHOULD KNOW:	GRADUATES SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO:

4. The Purpose of Education in the 80's:

A. As the world we live in changes, we need to examine why we educate children. What should be the purpose(s) of Minnesota public education? For each "Purpose" statement below, please circle the priority which you feel it deserves. Please note that the highest priority is a "5", and the lowest priority is a "1".

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION	(HIGH) PRIORITY 5	4	3	2	1 (LOW)
1. To develop basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing).	5	4	3	2	1
2. To learn to think, solve problems, and make decisions.	5	4	3	2	1
3. To prepare for future learning.	5	4	3	2	1
4. To prepare for getting a job.	5	4	3	2	1
5. To gain an understanding of careers, occupations, and the world of work.	5	4	3	2	1
6. To learn to live and work in the new "information society", where information is valuable, and rapidly available.	5	4	3	2	1
7. To learn how to become a responsible member of our society, and how to participate as an informed citizen in our democracy.	5	4	3	2	1
8. To prepare to live, do business and work with people from different parts of the world.	5	4	3	2	1
9. To gain an appreciation of arts, culture and the "great works of mankind".	5	4	3	2	1
10. To provide the opportunity for each student to develop his / her individual potential.	5	4	3	2	1
11. To provide educational opportunities to meet the learning needs of <u>all</u> children (e.g., handicapped, gifted).	5	4	3	2	1
12. To provide for social development through athletics and other extra-curricular activities.	5	4	3	2	1
13. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1
14. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1
15. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1

B. In the spaces below, please rank the 5 "Purposes of Education" statements from part "A" above that you feel are <u>most important</u> for education in the 80's. Please list them by statement number in the order of highest to 5th highest.

# Highest	# 2nd Highest	# 3rd Highest	# 4th Highest	# 5th Highest

5. Decisions Regarding Public Education:

A. Please indicate who you believe should be involved in making decisions regarding public education in Minnesota (for example, who decided what learning opportunities will be offered?, how will these learning opportunities be offered?, how will they be financed?, etc....) and circle the degree of involvement that you feel each group should have. Please note that the highest degree on involvement is a "5", and the lowest degree (no involvement) is a "0".

GROUP	DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT (HIGH) 5	4	3	2	1	0 (NONE)
1. Parents	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Business	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. State Government (legislature, Dept. of Education, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Local School Board	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. School Building Administrators	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Teachers	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. The Learners (students)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Federal Government	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Groups of Districts (district cooperatives)	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1	0

6. Changes In Education:

A. If you believe changes are needed in public education in Minnesota, please respond below:

WHAT SHOULD BE CHANGED?	HOW CAN IT BE CHANGED?

B. Comments:

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7. Summary:

A. Do you think participating in the Minnesota Dialogue On Education was a valuable experience ?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments:

B. Would you participate in a similar event again ?

☐ YES ☐ NO

C. How would you improve such an event in the future ?

8. Other Comments (feel free to use the remaining space for additional comments, or to continue your responses to items 3 or 6).

Please do not hesitate to make additional copies of this Dialogue Response as needed.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND COOPERATION !!

APPENDIX B

Discussion Questions for Small Groups and Discussion Sheets

This list of questions is posed for discussion in small groups around the state. This is one method for you, as a citizen, to share your ideas about the purpose of education in the 1980's.

Your group leader will record the major points of your discussion of these questions. Your responses will be sent to the Department of Education to be analyzed and included in the Dialogue report.

It is not necessary for you to reach a consensus in your responses to these questions!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. A great deal of human and dollar resources are committed every year to support our public education system. The reasons for public education and the goals and purposes that guide decisions about our schools are discussed and debated. For example: Does education exist to further self-development? To help young people get jobs? To ensure that children learn basic skills? To socialize children to function as responsible citizens in our society? etc...?

   In our changing society, we need a clear vision of why we are educating children. What do you believe the purpose(s) of education in the 1980's should be?

2. Our society is constantly changing. As we move into the future, the students of the 1980's will need to deal with being "world citizens", will live and work in the "computer age" and will continue to need educational opportunities to develop individual potential and become responsible citizens. What do you believe a Minnesota high school graduate in the 1980's (and beyond) should know and know how to do upon graduation?

3. Traditionally, public education in our state has been carried out within a five day week between approximately 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. from September 1 to June 1 with some slight variations. Should this be changed in the 1980's?

4. A number of individuals and agencies are involved in various ways in a child's education. Who do you believe should be involved in making decisions about public education in Minnesota in the 1980's?

5. What changes do you believe are needed in public education in the 1980's?

APPENDIX C

Minnesota Dialogue on Education
Class Discussion and Recording Sheet
February 15, 1984
Grades K-4

(School District Name)	(Number)	(Grade Level)	(Number of Students Participating)

QUESTION:

Do you think that changes are needed in our public schools so students will be ready to live and work in the future? If yes, what changes are needed?

Minnesota Dialogue on Education
Class Discussion and Recording Sheet
February 15, 1984
Grades 5-8
QUESTION 1

(School District Name)	(Number)	(Grade Level)	(Number of Students Participating)

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Minnesota Dialogue on Education
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QUESTION 2

(School District Name)	(Number)	(Grade Level)	(Number of Students Participating)

QUESTION 2: What do you think a student should have learned by the time he/she graduates from high school?

(Teacher: Please record students' ideas and comments on this sheet.)

APPENDIX D

Proposed Agenda for the Town Meeting

AGENDA

7:00 - 7:15 PM	Introduction and Welcome
7:15 - 7:30 PM	Video Tape of the Commissioner of Education
7:30 - 8:30 PM	Small Group Discussions
8:30 - 9:30 PM	Open-Mike Session
9:30 - 9:45 PM	Report from the Town Meeting Recorder on Small Group Discussions
9:45 - 10:00 PM	Summary and Collection of Individual Dialogue Response Sheets